

mystery and wonder. Men became as gods by knowledge of it. From that knowledge they acquired power to make things grow and so got food and escaped want. The interest in sex, and the customs connected with it, was revived in connection with agriculture. The mode of fructifying the date palm was a very great discovery in natural science. Primitive men would turn it into a religious fact and rule. The inference that women should be consecrated to the goddess of life and that in her service reproduction should be their sacred duty was in the logic of primitive people. Ishtar was polyandrous, but she turned into Ashtar, the wife of the chief Baal, or else she became androgyne and then masculine. There is a virgin mother and a mother of the gods. The idea of the latter continued with invincible persistency. She may be unmarried, choosing her partners at will, or "queen, head, and first born of all gods." / In these changes we see the religious notions and the mores adjusting themselves to each other. As long as the underlying notions were true and sincere and the logic was honest, the usages were harmless. When the original notions were lost, or the logic became an artificial cover for a real ethical inconsistency, and the customs were kept up, perhaps to give gain to priests, the usages served licentiousness.

593. Religion and the mores. Religion never has been an independent force acting from outside creatively to mold the mores or the ideas of men. Evidently such an idea is the extreme form of the world philosophy in which another (spiritual) world is conceived of as impinging upon this one from "above," to give it laws and guidance. The mores grow out of the life as a

whole. They change with the life conditions,
density of population, and life experience. Then they become
strange or hostile
to traditional religion. In our own experience our
mores have
reached views about ritual practices, polygamy,
slavery, celibacy,
etc., which are strange or hostile to those in the
Bible. Since
the sixteenth century we have reconstructed our
religion to fit
our modern ideas and mores. Every religious
reform in history
has come about in this way. All religious
doctrines and ritual

¹ W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the Semites*, 56-59.